

Firetti Contemporary contributes to the Public Art Scene of Dubai

The installations stand in support of the UAE's campaign against global warming for the well-being of future generations



Press Release

Pillar of Fortitude by Helidon Xhixha installed at DIFC, Gate 6 Podium Level (above Hutong Restaurant)

Dubai, UAE: On the occasion of the UAE 50th National Day on 2nd December, Firetti Contemporary installed a monumental sculpture at DIFC.

Pillar of Fortitude by Helidon Xhixha is dedicated to the glorious celebration marking the nation's milestone Golden Jubilee. The sculpture measures 7 meters in height, alluding to the numeric 1, representing the 7 Emirates of the UAE, standing tall and united, soaring upwards into the sky, towards a prosperous, limitless future.

As His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan said: "Year of the 50th represents a historic defining moment in our journey that started immediately after the declaration of the UAE's union in 1971. It's an acknowledgement of the resolute will and strong determination our Founding Fathers had while building up their nation."

This is the third monumental installation across the city by the Gallery, as, on the 13th of December, the official private inaugural ceremony of IMPRINT will take place with the support of Dr. Saeed Mubarak bin Kharbash, CEO of the Arts and Literature Sector at Dubai Culture and Art Authority (Dubai Culture). ***IMPRINT: Art for Public Spaces*** features the placement of two monumental sculptures, standing as an astounding manifesto supporting the awareness of global warming and the melting of polar glaciers.

The continuance of IMPRINT in Jumeirah Golf Estates will feature the installation of two monumental sculptures entitled *ICEBERG* and *EARTH* within the JGE community, embracing the message behind IMPRINT. This collaboration aligns with the core values of Expo 2020 - Connecting Minds and Creating the Future through sustainability, mobility, and opportunity.

These installations align with Dubai Culture's sectoral pillar to attract creative individuals from around the world across the arts and culture sector to showcase their work in one of the world's most desirable and aspirational destinations towards positioning the emirate as a coveted destination of choice by all arts and culture enthusiasts, a beacon of cultural diversity for international talent, and the epicentre for creativity and cultural dialogue.

Dr. Saeed Mubarak bin Kharbash said: "Dubai Culture believes in cross-cultural collaboration and is developing international partnerships to strengthen its global footprint and attract global talents through new initiatives that aim to develop the creative sector in Dubai and boost its contribution to the national economy under the overarching Dubai Creative Economy Strategy. It, therefore, gives us great pride to be welcoming Helidon Xhixha, whose work has captured the imaginations of the art world and will add a valuable aesthetic element to the Jumeirah Golf Estates community."

Among the special guests are Dina Storey, Head of Sustainability Operations EXPO2020; Ermal Dredha, Ambassador of Albania; Nicola Lener, Ambassador of Italy; Sara Pandolfini, Honourary Italian Consul in Sweden; Khalil Abdulwahid, Director of Fine Arts Department at Dubai Culture; and artist Helidon Xhixha.

The floating installation, *ICEBERG* by Helidon Xhixha, was first exhibited in the middle of the Venetian lagoon on the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. four-metre-high stainless-steel sculpture captivated audiences, garnering much attention from industry professionals and the media alike as it floated through the Canal Grande and the Venetian lagoon. This outstanding reflective sculpture made a statement about global warming and the potential impact it could have on a place like Venice in the near future.

The public can imagine this floating metal block as an actual small iceberg that has detached itself from an icecap and, floating astray, arrived in the Persian Gulf. The view is shocking and aesthetically fascinating and represents an alarming ecological warning.

The UAE is classified among the countries with the highest vulnerability rate to the potential effects of climate change, resulting in warmer weather, fewer precipitations, and higher sea levels. The UAE recognises the global responsibility it is committed to and has integrated climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning. The installation supports the country's fight against this disastrous phenomenon for the well-being of future generations.

Parallel to the environmental message, *EARTH* provokes thoughts on the impact of climate change, a global problem that will affect every individual on each of the world's seven continents. The installation *EARTH* works in conjunction with *ICEBERG*, acting as its terrestrial counterpoint and memorialising the continued damage we inflict upon the planet.

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